

What Is Claimed Is:

5 1. A method for transmitting a message to an intended recipient, the method comprising:

 receiving an oral message for an intended recipient from a sending party;

 determining whether a voice mail box associated with the intended recipient is full;

10 if the intended recipient's mail box is full, converting the oral message into a text message using speech recognition software; and

 transmitting the text message to the intended recipient.

15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein transmitting the text message further comprises emailing the text message to the recipient.

 3. The method of claim 1, wherein transmitting the text message further comprises faxing the text message to the recipient.

20 4. The method of claim 1, wherein transmitting the text message further comprises sending an instant message to the recipient.

 5. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of determining a facsimile phone number for the intended recipient by accessing a database.

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6. The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of determining an email address for the intended recipient by accessing a database.

5 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of notifying the sender of the oral message of the status of transmitting the text message to the intended recipient.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the oral message is received on an integrated services network.

10 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the oral message is received on an integrated services network.

15 10. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of storing information related to the transmitted text message.

11. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of billing the intended recipient of the text message.

20 12. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of billing the sender of the oral message.

25 13. An answering service, the answering service performing the steps of:
receiving an oral message from a sender for a recipient;
determining whether a voice mail box associated with the recipient is full;

if the recipient voice mail box is full:

converting the oral message into a text message;

audibly playing the text message to the sender for error correction;

receiving error correction from the recipient, if any; and

5 transmitting the text message to the recipient; and

if the recipient voice mail box is not full, delivering the oral message to the recipient's voice mail box.

14. The answering service of claim 13, wherein converting the oral
10 message into a text message occurs using speech recognition software.

15. The answering service of claim 13, wherein converting the oral message into a text message further comprises:

15 determining whether words exist in the oral message that may not be contained in a general purpose speech recognition software program; and

if words exist in the oral message that are not likely contained in a general purpose speech recognition software program, applying a restricted domain speech recognition program.

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